



# **ToxicFreeTips**

## *for HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS*

### **Shop Smart & Choose Safer Options**

- Read labels first. Avoid products labeled “Danger” or “Poison”.
- Avoid using aerosols and scented products in households with asthma.
- Buy the least amount of product for the job.
- Create a low-cost household cleaning kit with white vinegar, baking soda, borax, castile soap, and a spray bottle. Find recipes on the back of this sheet.

### **Use with Care**

- Clean when children, pets and seniors are out of the room.
- Ventilate – open windows and doors, turn on fans.
- Read and follow directions.
- Never mix bleach with other household cleaners.
- Send less down the drain - use less and use it less often.
- Keep products in their original, labeled containers.
- Store products away from children and pets.

### **Dispose Safely**

- Never pour toxic household cleaners on the ground, down storm drains, or in waterways.
- Clean out stored products annually.
- Read the label for hazards.
- Check your local garbage service or 1-800-RECYCLE for disposal options.



**Keep your home and the Earth healthy.**  
*Hazardous Substance Information & Education Office*  
*ToxicFreeTips 1-866-939-9991*  
[www.ecy.wa.gov/ToxicFreeTips](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/ToxicFreeTips)  
*Ecology Publication Number 08-04-011 (Rev. 3-09)*

If you need this information in an alternate format, please call the Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program at 360-407-6700. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341.

# HOUSEHOLD CLEANING RECIPES

## Tub & Sink Cleaner

- Baking Soda
- Liquid Castile Soap/Murphy's Soap

You can use baking soda in place of your scouring powder. Sprinkle it on Porcelain fixtures and rub with a wet rag. Add a little soap to the rag for more cleaning power. Rinse well to avoid leaving a hazy film.

## Window and Mirror Cleaner

- Vinegar
- Water

Just put ¼ cup vinegar in the spray bottle and fill to top with water. Spray on surface. Rub with a diaper, other lint-free rag, or sheets of newspaper. For outdoor windows use a sponge and wash with warm water with a few drops of liquid castile soap in it. Rinse well and squeegee dry.

## Toilet Bowl Cleaner

- Baking Soda
- Liquid Castile Soap/Murphy's Soap

Sprinkle baking soda inside the bowl as you would any scouring powder. Squeeze a couple of drops of soap in also. Scrub with a toilet bowl brush and finish outside surfaces with a rag sprinkled with baking soda.

## All-Purpose Cleaner

(for spots on linoleum, tile, and woodwork)

- Liquid Castile Soap/Murphy's Soap

Squeeze a drop of soap on a wet washcloth and rub briskly. A washcloth will last longer and create less waste than a sponge.

## Drain Cleaner

- Baking Soda
- Boiling Water
- Vinegar

This recipe will free minor clogs and helps to prevent future clogs. Pour 1/2 cup of the baking soda down the drain first, then 1/2 cup vinegar. Let it fizz for a few minutes. Then pour down a teakettle full of boiling water. Repeat if needed. If the clog is stubborn, use a plunger. If very stubborn, use a mechanical snake.

## Oven Cleaner

- Baking Soda
- Water

Mix 1 cup of baking soda with enough water to make a paste. Apply to oven surfaces and let stand a little while. Use the scouring pad for scrubbing most surfaces. A spatula or bread knife is effective to get under large food deposits. This recipe will require "elbow grease", but it is not toxic to you or your child. Try spot cleaning your oven regularly; dirty ovens are less energy-efficient. Do not use this cleaner on self cleaning ovens.

### Sources:

- Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, *Green Cleaning Kit* handout, <http://www.tpchd.org/files/library/81d45ec2a0e09801.pdf>
- Public Health Seattle & King County, [www.metrokc.gov/HEALTH/asthma/facts/greencleaning.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/HEALTH/asthma/facts/greencleaning.htm)
- Seattle Public Utilities, *Choose Safe Cleaning Products*, [http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Garbage/Hazardous\\_Waste\\_Disposal\\_%26\\_Reduction/Choose\\_Safe\\_Cleaning\\_Products/index.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Garbage/Hazardous_Waste_Disposal_%26_Reduction/Choose_Safe_Cleaning_Products/index.asp)
- Soap and Detergent Association, *Ten Ideas for Keeping Kids Safe While Cleaning*, press release, March 10, 2007.
- Soap and Detergent Association, *CleaningProductFacts.com, Cleaning If You Have Allergies or Asthma*, August 7, 2007.